

NOTES ON THE NIDIFICATION OF *SPHECOTHERES MAXILLARIS*, (LATH.), AND OF *CAMPEPHAGA LEUCOMELÆNA*, (V. & H.), WITH DESCRIPTIONS OF THEIR EGGS.

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(Communicated by Dr. E. P. Ramsay, F.R.S.E.)

*SPHECOTHERES MAXILLARIS*, Lath.

*S. australis*, Gould, Bds. Aust. Handb., p. 467, sp. 286.

This remarkable species, which appears to be somewhat gregarious in its habits, I found breeding during the latter part of October and the beginning of November in the brushes of the Richmond River, where the birds are plentiful.

The nests, of which several were discovered in adjoining trees, are rather slight and shallow, constructed of small thin twigs interwoven loosely, not unlike a large nest of *Pachycephala gutturalis*, and are usually placed at the extremity of a horizontal branch about twenty feet from the ground, the tree most favoured being the *Flindersia* (?). Three nests obtained on November 4th, contained each three eggs, which appear to be the regular number for a sitting, all quite fresh. An average-sized pair of these eggs measure as follows:—(A) Length, 1·25 × 0·88 inch; (B) Length, 1·25 × 0·9 inch.

The ground color varies from olive-brown to dull apple-green; the spots sometimes confluent and forming small irregular blotches are of a reddish-brown, in some brighter and redder, in others very like those on the eggs of *Cracticus destructor*; the markings are distributed over the whole surface, but are usually closer together on the thicker end, where in some they form an irregular zone.

## CAMPEPHAGA LEUCOMELÆNA, V. and H.

*C. leucomela*, V. and Horsf. ; Gould, Bds. Aust. Handbk., p. 203, sp. 111.

A nest of this species taken at Ballina near the mouth of the Richmond River on November 4th, is composed of the wiry and pliant stems of herbs and grasses entwined and matted together with cobweb, and a few pieces of lichen felted together making the outside resemble the branch, in a fork of which it is placed ; the nest is about the size of that of *Lalage tricolor*, being comparatively small for the size of the bird ; the one at present under consideration was placed between a fork in a small branch of a Tea-tree (*Melaleuca* sp.); it is a small and shallow structure, being only 2·1 inches outside diameter by 1·35 inches inside, and without any special lining. It contained but one egg, which I believe is all that is laid for a sitting, for on shooting and dissecting the female no other egg was found in any degree of maturity.

The egg is of a bright apple-green color, with a well-defined zone of reddish-brown spots near the thicker end ; the rest of the surface is thickly sprinkled with dots, freckles, and small spots of the same, or of a slightly brighter tint, which are less close together on the thin end ; it is rather elongated in form, measuring in length 0·98 inch, its shorter diameter being 0·68.